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The New Poem Games*

A Way of Having a Good Time Without Guests, Good Clothes, or Refreshments

VACHEL LINDSAY

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: The Spokane poem games, the immediate stimulus for Mr. Lindsay's two articles, began in 1926 and extended over a period of two years. In these poem games, Mr. Lindsay worked with informal social groups, unified by his chanting and participant in choral refrains. Professional dancers, young students of the dance, and rank amateurs were included in the interpretative group. The atmosphere was at all times experimental, informal, and light-hearted.

Mr. Lindsay's own discussion of the vitality

of poem games as a possible art form may be taken as final. Those who are interested in the subject will do well to read the brief account in *The Chinese Nightingale*; the references in the prefaces to the *Collected Poems* (1925); and the preface to *Every Soul Is a Circus*. These sources, together with the two articles in *The Review*, suggest his fundamental philosophy on a subject which offers an interesting synthesis to students of the arts.

ELIZABETH CONNER LINDSAY

ALL THE ladies who read this article should crowd it upon their husbands if possible; for there is not a male in the world but wants to have a good time in the evening without "guests," good clothes, or refreshments.

The reason the poem games can be carried on without "guests" is that even in a large parlor, the performers fill all the space; so, two neighbors asked in without notice seem like a thousand, if they warm up and march and sing and chant, as they will inevitably do. For our poem games we have drawn the largest possible circle

on the floor with a chalky preparation which can be washed off at a moment's notice, but which will stay there as long as we need it. Using the same center as the circle, we have drawn an oval which not only includes the parlor (a large parlor in a tiny flat), but sweeps on into the next room, where one or two chairs are placed for those who are chanting, or waiting to rise up and act. This is all the preparation.

Typical eternal poem games are "King William Was King James's Son," "London Bridge Is Falling Down," "Farmer in the Dell," "Go in and out the Window," and "Three Blind Mice." We apply these principles to grown up verses. Think

* This is the first of two manuscripts of Vachel Lindsay unpublished at his death. The second article, on the same subject, contains a hitherto unpublished poem. It will appear in a forthcoming issue of *The Review*.

through how you used to do them. Call in the children to do them. Watch closely. Then elaborate on the methods. Thus, this article may be short, and yet complete.

Why the circle and the oval? Answer: To get people to spread themselves and take in the entire limits of the room when they start marching or singing. They are too apt to huddle like the proverbial sheep in a storm. We wish to guide their wandering feet without being too firm and too dowagery about it. I have seen great Russian dancers jammed in the middle of the stage when they should be taking the whole of it as on Mordkin's latest tour.

I insist that this is no stunt for an iron-handed hostess; this article is to be read by wives, to the kind of men who smoke big black cigars and who get nervous at ten-thirty when the chicken salad on the lettuce leaf is passed around. If you guarantee to the gentlemen, dear ladies, that no salad will ever be passed around, and that no man will ever be asked to wear a dress suit, your games will take the village, "Come as you are."

The neighbors will be looking in the windows, mad as the old scratch because they are not asked in as spectators and critics. Hold your rule like iron, that he who will not sing and improvise, neither shall he, be invited. This rule can be enforced, unless the hostess is a 'fraid cat, and a rabbit and a mouse all in one.

Quite solemn and formal discussions of my old poem games are to be found in *The Chinese Nightingale*, and *The Illustrated Collected Poems*, etc. The method of these games can be applied to about a third of the verses of the world, but time and tide are such that at present in our parlor there seems to be more energy than anywhere else about trying out this particular idea again.

These poem games are as far from jazz as from the temples of Baal. They came into existence long before jazz was ever heard of; they have an utterly different

principle and direction; yet that word jazz has been so thoroughly plastered on all my work, in spite of my protest (which has sometimes become a shriek) that the laughter and the love was almost taken out of the old games; and people, imagining our frolics to be based on the slide trombone and the saxophone, and other brass instruments which are played during human sacrifices, and which I hate, passed the poem games up.

All musical instruments are now taboo with reference to my work in games. Those who set my poems to their music, even grand opera music, have offered me the deadliest possible insult, have utterly missed the point of the whole show, and put a sacred Siamese white elephant into my cottage without my consent. My words are inseparable from my own tunes and my own methods.

My wife and I have just composed a manifesto for The New Poem Games. Note that word "new"; it eliminates all debate in regard to work done heretofore, and gives us the fresh start. I have had my chair jerked out from under me, just as I started to sit down, so many times in my life by some presumptuous small boy who was trying to run away with my stuff, that I suppose it is useless now to try to argue about the old work, much. So note that word "new," a word always loved in the United States. One might even call these "the modern poem games," since the word "modern" is so delicately precious among those who are weary.

In "The Flying Book with Wings and Leaves of Gold" poem, people are to make angels of themselves, just as children used to do in the snow, and do now every time new snow comes. They lie down on their backs in unbroken, clean, new snow, and sweep their arms from above their heads to their sides, straight-armed motion, with one unbroken sweep. Then they get up, and there is an angel

in the snow. It is a little easier to make than a snowball or a snowman, and so the smallest child can make what is really a beautiful angel. In the giving of this poem game, all the actors march about, dance and chant to the rhythms, while those that remain in their seats, give their special attention to holding the music in form, as the dancers whirl faster and faster, and find themselves too short of breath to

chant. The thing can be done with no special costume, or with any improvised costumes you please, in bathing suits or with elaborate wings, or both, The less preparation and the more enthusiasm the better.

The poem games are not necessarily based on new poems. Dryden's "Alexander's Feast" can be worked up the same way.

Boar's Head Carol

THE boar's head in hand bear I,
Bedeck'd with bay and rosemary;
And I pray you, my masters, be merry,
Quot estis in convivio.
Caput apri defero,
Reddens laudes Domino.

THE boar's head as I understand,
Is the rarest dish in all this land,
Which thus bedeck'd with a gay garland,
Let us servire cantico.
Caput apri defero,
Reddens laudes Domino.

OUR steward hath provided this,
In honour of the King of bliss;
Which on this day to be served is,
In reginensi atrio.
Caput apri defero,
Reddens laudes Domino.

—Traditional

Books for the Children's Christmas*

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A BOOK-STORE on the city's busiest street has dressed its two windows for the holidays, one for the grown-ups, and the other, gaily resplendent, for the children. In front of the second window passers-by and shoppers linger, apparently refreshing themselves with a pleasant preview of real Christmas celebration. Richly colored picture books stand open. Inside of evergreen wreaths the bright book jackets and fancy bindings look very desirable. The titles, becomingly childlike, proffer an appealing variety.

To some of the older people looking in the window has come a fleeting memory of Christmas mornings long years ago, when the gem of surprises was a little brown-backed book. Its print was small, its pictures (made from steel-engravings, and of course uncolored) were less enchanting than the visions which they stirred in the imagination; but how beloved was every page! Children of today probably wouldn't even glance at such a plain, homely thing, soliloquizes one person. Another knows something about book illustration, and is enjoying a lavish spree amid the abundance of well-designed plates. His gloating professional eye, skipping from page to page about the window, finds this new, that exciting, here an artistic innovation, there a good pattern.

"Surely childhood is recaptured here," thinks the mother of a brood that finds it

more pleasant to be off to the movies than kept at home with books. "We must build up their library."

To nearly all grown-ups that enticing display of children's books brings a happy emotion, perhaps unrealized, but somehow connected with the savory joys of an old-fashioned Christmas. Weary shoppers, hope renewed, go inside to select gifts for their sons, nieces, pupils, and godchildren. Then the problems arise. What to choose, among so many! The tables and shelves of the shop are just as inviting and even more bewildering than the display window. Interested adults, parents, and even teachers do well if they know just a few of the most talked of books for children each year, out of so many.

The children's librarian, to whom the knowledge is an everyday necessity, would, if she were allowed, put one warning into the minds of all who buy books for children in these days of over-production. *All is not gold that glitters*. Inside many a gorgeous wrapper is an empty story. Some of those freshly skillful drawings which entranced the trained eye of the student artist have scant appeal to childhood. In spite of attractive advertising, favorable reviews (by clever grown-ups), and a fancy price, that book which is featured prominently, and made on creamy paper with glowing lithographs, may literally waste the time of the eleven-year-old for whom it is intended.

Mere newness is the least significant factor in a collection for children, unless you are buying for a child who already

* This article was prepared under the direction of Miss Ethel Wright, Chairman of the Book Evaluation Committee, Section for Library Work with Children, American Library Association.

has the good books of other years. At the present rate that's hardly possible. The proportion of books important enough to keep alive out of the hosts published for young people each year is small, about fifteen per cent ordinarily, but perhaps slightly higher since the depression. In children's books, as in any other kind, it is style, charm, depth, appeal, that make a book a book, and therefore an object to possess.

Before buying books for children this Christmas, it is important to measure this year's output alongside the best of last year's and all the years before. Out of the thus slightly increased body of the positively worth-while, choose to the taste of your particular child, without regard for copyright date. Do not be over-impressed by pleasing displays, or persuasive advertising, or the review notes of a critic whose standards are easy. Excellence is the criterion, and it is obtainable. Book-sellers naturally cater to popular taste, for their wares are profit-seeking articles of commerce. Create a demand for better books and the dealer will be influenced to stock the hardy perennials at the expense of the season's puffballs.

To begin with fundamentals, there are a few books which every book-loving child should possess, upon which to build his own permanent library. These may be given to boys or girls up to about ten, with a well-based satisfaction that the investment never will be really outgrown. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Andersen's Fairy Tales*, and Stevenson's *Child's Garden of Verses* are usually felt to be the first three universal classics deserving a niche among lifelong treasures. They are such celebrated names to readers young and old that one would be impatient of hearing their description. Next in the line of great fame probably would rank Kipling's *Jungle Book*, *Aesop's Fables*, and Milne's *When We Were Very Young*. To these six aristocrats of

children's literature let me add two which aren't yet known around the world, but which do deserve shelf space in this permanent library of the ten year old child: *The Winged Horse*, by Auslander and Hill, which is the story of the poets and their poetry, and a lovely thing to own; and Hillyer's *A Child's History of the World*. Far from resembling a school book, this last is one of the most fascinating possessions a child with a taste for history could boast.

Perhaps the most fun a book-buying adult can enjoy is possible when a very young child is on the Christmas gift list. Then the whole bright realm of picture books and easy reading books is explorable. No more fertile place can be found in modern literature for children, so the brief selection possible here is somewhat arbitrary. Wanda Gág's *The A B C Bunny* is a recent and expertly lithographed picture book for the three-year-old. It and the Jessie Willcox Smith *Little Mother Goose* are excellent choices for the child's first books. From four to six he will love and make every word in *Johnny Crow's Garden*, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, and *Angus and the Ducks* his own. They are great favorites with pre-school age children, at home or in their kindergartens. The present book season has added two simple, pleasantly illustrated, little stories for girls of seven or eight who want something to read by themselves: *Blue-bonnets for Lucinda*, by Sayers, and Brock's *Little Fat Gretchen*.

Among the important picture books with established charms are the Peter-shams' *Miki* and Elsa Beskow's *Aunt Green*, *Aunt Brown* and *Aunt Lavender*. They are examples of the hoped-for relationship between an excellent story and childlike pictures, each being ideally blended with the other. Advancing with the age of appeal, an exceptionally bright child of eight will be fortunate to own one of last year's most distinguished

books, *Get-a-way and Hány János*, or one equally vivid in story and illustration which is new this Christmas, *Flash, the Story of a Horse, a Coach-dog, and the Gypsies*. Before we leave the picture books, the older admirers of their charms, boys and girls of about ten, have two recent and individually beautiful offerings to their taste. Last winter brought *The Conquest of the Atlantic*, to describe the conquering navigation which, beginning with the Vikings and coming down to Lindbergh, has made the ocean a cradle of history. The D'Aulaires, its authors, illustrated it with remarkable lithographs. Since then Clément's *Flowers of Chivalry* has been published, which is a picture book only in size. Its stories of legendary and medieval France, artistically set off with page decorations, have an inviting appearance and furnish at the same time a book full of reading.

At Christmas time there are always many people who wish to give children Bible stories, but do not know what to choose. The poetry and dignity of the matchless original has been changed into many empty shapes. Great shame it is that children should be given stories from the Bible so lifelessly retold that no spark of their vigorous spirit catches the child's imagination. The first Bible book for the very young child might best be *The Christ Child* by Maud and Miska Petersham, an exquisite picture book. Then choose for those who have learned to read the distinguished new *A First Bible*, illustrated by Helen Sewell; and for the older child there is Walter De la Mare's *Stories from the Bible*, which is the only splendid retelling of Bible stories yet achieved.

The magic time of childhood is the time of loving fairy tales. Much is said of this modern world's impress upon the beginning generation, but it does not seem to have invaded their fairyland where the old enchantment lingers. The present season has brought out some good new ones,

notably *The Old Sailor's Yarn Box*, an amusing collection by Eleanor Farjeon, and Dorothy Lathrop's story of *The Snail Who Ran*. These are for the younger children. Also recently the older fairy tale readers had *The Story of Beowulf*, by Riggs, an excellent version of the legend, preserving its essential sonorousness. The colored ink illustrations by Henry Pitz are also in the epic spirit.

An easy collection of the most famous, familiar fairy tales is *Once Upon a Time* by Katharine Lee Bates. Children of four and over can hear read aloud its time-worn themes of giants, sleeping princesses, beanstalks, and glass slippers. Two splendid collections for the ten-year-old are *The Firelight Fairy Book* and *The Wonder Clock*. These provide food for many a rainy day. Christmas festivity is enthusiastically celebrated in Ruth Sawyer's *This Way to Christmas*, a sparkling group of stories.

One of the rarest fairy tales in many years, *The Adventures of Mario*, by Bonsels, is a beautiful gift for the bright boy or girl who is close to outgrowing fairy tales. Mario's friendships with the woods creatures are told in the true vein of youth's real literature. Children at the same stage who appreciate fine writing of another kind will like *The Golden Fleece*, a choice collection of Greek myths by Padraic Colum. Two older favorites always make suitable gifts: *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens*, and *The King of the Golden River*, both obtainable in enticing editions.

During the last year almost anyone who keeps up with book production for young people might well wish to know some special boy or girl to whom to give one of the new, stouter-than-fiction books, one who can taste the rarer, more bookish flavor with an untimid appetite. That young person ideally should be between ten and the high school age. There are at least seven of these new, unusual books,

and grown-ups are just as keen about them as youth.

One is *The Book of Americans*, Benét's rollicking portrait gallery, done with poems and vivid pictures. Very serious and brilliant in style we next have Lisitzky's *Thomas Jefferson*; and Cornelia Meigs' fine story of the author of *Little Women*, *Invincible Louisa*; also the homespun hero, *Davy Crockett*, by Rourke; three memorable biographies which have set a new standard of excellence for what is in general termed non-fiction for children. Then some further stir about figures of the past, two colorful books by Eleanor and Herbert Farjeon were hailed with applause last season: *Heroes and Heroines* and *Kings and Queens*. The monarchs of England and the world's renowned, strut upon their pages, boldly caricatured and described in verses full of spirit and fun. A choice book of another kind is *The Pageant of Chinese History* by Seeger. Strange, fascinating stories of the Orient are woven into the scholarly background of that ancient land.

In a discussion of this length it is impossible to do more than touch the surface of the great body of fiction written for boys and girls. It usually is the object of the most finished authorship, the surest inspiration, and the richest variety in our American child's book heritage. The few chosen here are peers. While they may be considered touchstones for trying the quality of stories generally, in the more popular fields there is much also to be said for the sincere, but less literary better fiction, such as public libraries buy for their masses. This good middle class, which ranges high above the series trash, will have to be omitted here in order to point out a few peaks in juvenile fiction.

Beginning with the eight-year-old girl, *Memoirs of a London Doll* is one of the

beloved little volumes which year in and out is new to its readers. Last year the children slightly older received a fine boon in Laura Wilder's *Farmer Boy*, a deeply satisfying story of good life on a farm sixty-five years ago. *Master Skylark* is a lovely story of Shakespeare's time, and *Downright Dencey* tells of an unforgettable Quaker maid, a true heroine of old Nantucket. Also for older girls, *The Calico Bush* by Rachel Field recreates life in Maine when it was still Indian country and adds brave French Maggie to fiction's roll of honor. These two and a third, *Master Simon's Garden* by Meigs give, in eloquent character portraiture, a true sense of the founding of the American tradition. The ideals and visions of those early days are etched into Dencey, Maggie, and Simon, good companions all, for modern children.

These last three have the powerful sweep of great European periods and historical characters that typify an age. *Otto of the Silver Hand* is a boy's classic of thirteenth century Germany, done in the best Howard Pyle style; *Out of the Flame*, is Eloise Lowmsbery's authentic reconstruction, in a full-bodied young novel, of sixteenth century France; and of *The Prince and the Pauper* little need be said. Mark Twain's marvelous story of how little Tom Canty and Edward Tudor, then Prince of Wales, exchanged places, creating one of the priceless situations in all literature, is cherished by each succeeding generation of young readers.

So much for a few outstanding names in childhood's literature. Christmas is a time to buy for permanence, for far-reaching variety in the book collection, for beauty of rich colors that keep the festival around the year. Childhood, Christmas, and literature are three unfading certainties, against which, in the long run, false values cannot survive.

BOOKS MENTIONED

PERMANENT POSSESSIONS OF A CHILD ABOUT TEN

- Andersen. *Fairy Tales*. In many editions.
 Dodgson. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. In many editions.
 Stevenson. *A Child's Garden of Verses*. In many editions.
 Kipling. *Jungle Book*. Illus. by Kurt Wiese. Doubleday. \$2.50.
 Æsop. *Fables*. Illus. by Boris Artzybasheff. Viking. \$2.00.
 Milne. *When We Were Very Young*. Dutton. \$2.00.
 Auslander and Hill. *The Winged Horse*. Doubleday. \$1.50.
 Killyer. *A Child's History of the World*. Appleton-Century. \$2.00.

EASY READING AND PICTURE BOOKS

- Gág. *The ABC Bunny*. Coward. \$2.00.
 Mother Goose. *The Jessie Willcox Smith Little Mother Goose*. Dodd. \$1.50.
 Brooke. *Johnny Crow's Garden*. Warne. \$1.00.
 Potter. *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. Warne. \$.75.
 Flack. *Angus and the Ducks*. Doubleday. \$1.00.
 Sayers. *Bluebonnets for Lucinda*. Viking. \$1.00.
 Brock. *Little Fat Gretchen*. Knopf. \$1.25.
 Petersham. *Miki*. Doubleday. \$2.00.
 Beskow. *Aunt Green, Aunt Brown and Aunt Laverder*. Harper. \$2.50.
 Petersham. *Get-a-way and Hány János*. Viking. \$2.00.
 Averill. *Flash, the Story of a Horse, a Coach-dog, and the Gypsies*. Smith & Haas. \$2.00.
 D'Aulaire. *Conquest of the Atlantic*. Viking. \$2.50.
 Clément. *Flowers of Chivalry*. Doubleday. \$2.50.

BEAUTIFUL GIFT BOOKS

- De la Máre. *Peacock Pie*. Illus. by C. Lovat Fraser. Holt. \$5.00.
 Boutet de Monvel. *Joan of Arc*. Appleton-Century. \$4.00.
 Gibson. *The Goldsmith of Florence*. Macmillan. \$5.00.
 Lorenzini. *Adventures of Pinocchio*. Illus. by Attilio Musino. Macmillan. \$6.00.
 Irving. *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. Illus. by Arthur Rackham. McKay. \$2.50.
 Hudson. *A Little Boy Lost*. Illus. by Dorothy Lathrop. Knopf. \$2.50.
 Blake. *Songs of Innocence*. Illus. by Jacynth Parsons. Hale. \$3.50.

NEW AND OLD FAIRY TALES AND SOME LEGENDS

- Farjeon. *The Old Sailor's Yarn Box*. Stokes. \$1.75.
 Lathrop. *The Snail Who Ran*. Stokes. \$1.00.

Riggs. *The Story of Beowulf*. Appleton-Century. \$2.50.

- Bates. *Once Upon a Time*. Rand. \$2.00.
 Beston. *The Firelight Fairy Book*. Little. \$2.50.
 Pyle. *The Wonder Clock*. Harper. \$2.50.
 Sawyer. *This Way to Christmas*. Harper. \$1.25.
 Bonsels. *The Adventures of Mario*. Boni. \$3.00.
 Colum. *The Golden Fleece*. Macmillan. \$2.25.
 Barrie. *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens*. Illus. by Arthur Rackham. Scribner. \$2.50.
 Ruskin. *King of the Golden River*. Lippincott. \$1.50.

THE BIBLE FOR CHILDREN

- Petersham. *The Christ Child*. Doubleday. \$2.00.
 Bible. *A First Bible*. Illus. by Helen Sewell. Oxford. \$2.50.
 De la Mare. *Stories from the Bible*. McKay. \$2.50.

RECENT NON-FICTION FOR BOYS AND GIRLS IN THE UPPER GRADES

- Benét. *Book of Americans*. Farrar. \$1.50.
 Lisitzky. *Thomas Jefferson*. Viking. \$2.50.
 Meigs. *Invincible Louisa*. Little. \$2.00.
 Rourke. *Davy Crockett*. Harcourt. \$2.50.
 Farjeon. *Heroes and Heroines*. Dutton. \$2.50.
 Farjeon. *Kings and Queens*. Dutton. \$2.00.
 Seeger. *Pageant of Chinese History*. Longmans. \$3.00.

SOME OF THE BEST FICTION, ARRANGED TO ADVANCE WITH THE AGE OF APPEAL

- Horne. *Memoirs of a London Doll*. Macmillan. \$1.00.
 Wilder. *Farmer Boy*. Harper. \$2.00.
 Bennett. *Master Skylark*. Illus. by Reginald Birch. Appleton-Century. \$2.00.
 Snedeker. *Downright Dencey*. Doubleday. \$2.00.
 Field. *The Calico Bush*. Macmillan. \$2.50.
 Meigs. *Master Simon's Garden*. Macmillan. \$1.75.
 Pyle. *Otto of the Silver Hand*. Scribner. \$2.50.
 Lownsbey. *Out of the Flame*. Longmans. \$2.50.
 Clemens. *The Prince and the Pauper*. Harper. \$2.25.

SOME DOLLAR BOOKS OF IMPORTANCE

- Alcott. *Little Women*. Illus. by J. W. Smith. Little.
Arabian Nights, retold by Lawrence Housman. Illus. by Edmund Dulac. Garden City.
 Grahame. *Wind in the Willows*. Scribner.
 Hawthorne. *Wonder Book and Tanglewood Tales*. Macrae.
 Lamb. *Tales from Shakespeare*. Macmillan.
 Lang. *Blue Fairy Book*. Macrae.
 Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. Illus. by Edmund Dulac. Garden City.
 White. *Daniel Boone*. Illus. by James Daugherty. Garden City.

Poem Selection for Primary Grades

EDNA MCGUIRE

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Far off the Fairy Horns are blowing
Through the morning, through the dew.
Above the emerald green and blue
The windy clouds are white and new.
We'll carry through this windy morn
Hearts fit to meet the Fairy Horn.

E. G. (age ten)¹

LITTLE children hear the fairy horns a-blowing because they possess the vividness of imagination which enables them to enter the world of fanciful and beautiful imagery. It is the gift of the poet that he, an adult, can come to think and feel as little children think and feel naturally. The love of poetry is the normal condition of childhood.

The values of poetry. Children have a natural interest in poetry, but that fact alone might not be sufficient reason for giving it a large place in the school curriculum. Poetry has values for the child. It stimulates his imagination, gives emotional release, and enriches the life of the hearer by making him more able to discern values clearly. Every race and nation has accumulated a literature embodying the ideals of the people and epitomizing their struggles. Poetry has a large place in this literature and the children of the race and nation certainly have a right to know this cultural heritage. Orton Lowe² stated another value of poetry when he said, "The proverbial songs of a nation are a greater force than its laws." Transcending all these other values, however, is the

one expressed by Juliet Hartman³ when she wrote:

Poetry is not a means of supplying useful information, or of training the memory except to learn more poetry, or improving the morals, or providing sage axioms and grammatical examples, or serving practical purposes. . . . It is the charm and glory of poetry that its high and single purpose is to make glad the heart of man.

Selection of poems. Since poetry is a natural interest of children, and has such marked values for them, the selection of the poems to be used at the various grade levels seems to be a matter of the greatest importance. Yet strangely enough this problem is still largely an unsolved one. The listing and grade placement of the poems has in most cases been determined subjectively by teachers and curriculum workers. More or less expert opinion has decided the poems and the levels at which they will be used. A few studies have been made, however, to determine objectively the poems which should be offered and the levels at which they can best be presented.

One group of workers seeking to use objective measures reviewed current practice as it was revealed by courses of study and text books and made a graded list of

¹ E. G. (age ten), Children's School, National College of Education. *The Curriculum Records of the Children's School*, p. 2. Evanston, Illinois: Bureau of Publications, National College of Education, 1932.

² Orton Lowe, *Literature for Children*, p. 19. New York: Ginn and Co., 1914.

³ Juliet Hartman, "The Place of Poetry in Children's Literature," *Elementary English Review*, IX (January, 1932), 17.

poems having the highest frequencies. Atherton⁴ and Bamesberger⁵ used this method entirely in their studies. Nesmith⁶ began with the same technique, but, after she had secured a list of poems having high frequencies in current courses of study and books, she submitted this list to a group of sixteen expert judges. No poem was included in her final graded list unless at least 75 per cent of the judges had voted it as "worthy" for that grade.

Another group of workers have tried to determine objectively the poems to be taught, but have approached the matter from the standpoint of children's interests rather than from current practice. King⁷ carried on a study of this type in 1922. Ten cities were used in the experiment and in each the superintendent designated one representative school to be used. The children were told that on the following day they would be asked to tell the two poems that they liked best. The teachers in grades one and two wrote down individual verbal responses, but the children from third through the eighth grades wrote their preferences. No list of poems was submitted to the children. In 1927 a very extensive study was carried out by Huber, Bruner, and Curry.⁸ They reviewed courses of study and secured expert opinion in order to compile a list of about one hundred poems for each grade, from one to nine inclusive. These poems, printed in experimental editions, were furnished to 60,000 children in centers scattered all over the country. The ex-

periment was conducted for eighteen weeks under carefully controlled conditions, and in this period each child came into contact with at least sixty of the hundred poems for his grade, and expressed his preferences. The results of all these choices were treated statistically and a final graded list compiled, based entirely upon pupil preference.

Another study which attempted to determine the poems which would be worth memorizing at each grade level should be mentioned here. It was carried out by Morgan⁹ through the National Educational Association *Journal* of which he is editor. He made up lists of poems for each grade from the results of the Bamesberger study and printed these, together with a ballot for voting on them, in the *Journal*. Teachers or others who were interested were invited to send in their ballots to show their preferences at each grade level. They might also submit other poems. Responses were secured from 372 individuals, and from their votes Morgan made a recommended list of poems for each grade.

Finding a basic list of poems. It was the purpose of the author to find a basic list of poems that could be used in grades one, two, and three. In arriving at this list the six previously mentioned objective studies which yielded graded lists were used. In addition, four lists subjectively prepared were also employed. The lists made by Lowe,¹⁰ Dearborn,¹¹ and Gardner and Ramsey¹² represent individual opinion, while the International Kindergarten Union¹³ list was prepared by com-

⁴ Lewis Atherton, "Literary Selections Most Frequently Memorized in the Elementary School," *Elementary School Journal*, XIV (January, 1914), 208.

⁵ Velda C. Bamesberger, "Standard Requirements for Memorizing Literary Material," *University of Illinois Bulletin, Bureau of Educational Research* No. 3. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois, 1920.

⁶ Mary Ethel Nesmith, *An Objective Determination of Stories and Poems for the Primary Grades*. Teachers College, Columbia University Contributions to Education, No. 255. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1927.

⁷ Cora E. King, "Favorite Poems for Children of Elementary School Age," *Teachers College Record*, XXIII (May, 1922), 255.

⁸ Marion B. Huber, Herbert B. Bruner and Charles M. Curry, *Children's Interests in Poetry*. Chicago: Rand McNally Co., 1927.

⁹ Joy Elmer Morgan, "Our Literary Heritage," *Fourth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence, The Nation at Work on the Public School Curriculum*, p. 290. Washington, D.C.: Department of Superintendence, N.E.A., 1926.

¹⁰ Orton Lowe, *Literature for Children*, p. 33. New York: Ginn and Co., 1914.

¹¹ Frances R. Dearborn, "Poetry in the First Three Grades," *Elementary English Review*, VII (March, 1930), 67.

¹² Emelyn E. Gardner and Eloise Ramsey, *A Handbook of Children's Literature*, p. 295. New York: Scott Foresman and Co., 1927.

¹³ *Selected List of Poetry and Stories for Children in Kindergarten, First and Second Grades*, p. 7. Washington, D.C.: International Kindergarten Union, 1928.

mittees. It is now in its second revised form. Eight of the ten lists used in the final checking gave poems for all three grades. Dearborn has poems for grade three only, and the International Kindergarten Union for grades one and two only. Thus there would be for a poem in any of the three grades a possible frequency of nine.

In grade one a total of 239 poems was mentioned on the nine lists. The frequencies with which poems recurred are shown in Table I.

TABLE I

FREQUENCIES OF THE FIRST GRADE POEMS	
Frequency	Number of Poems
1	178
2	35
3	15
4	7
5	3
6	1
TOTAL	239

In grade two a total of 203 poems was found on the nine lists. The frequencies of these poems are shown in Table II.

TABLE II

FREQUENCIES OF THE SECOND GRADE POEMS	
Frequency	Number of Poems
1	152
2	19
3	14
4	10
5	5
6	2
7	1
TOTAL	203

In grade three there were 233 poems mentioned on the nine lists. The frequency of mention is shown in Table III.

It was obviously necessary to set some arbitrary standard by which to select the final basic list, so it was decided to include in this list only those poems which had a frequency of four or more.

TABLE III

FREQUENCIES OF THE THIRD GRADE POEMS	
Frequency	Number of Poems
1	184
2	27
3	12
4	4
5	5
6	1
TOTAL	233

There were eleven poems in the first grade list of 239 which had a frequency of four or more. Table IV shows these poems and the lists in which they occurred. It may be interesting to note that the three subjectively determined lists are grouped together, and the six objectively determined lists follow in a second group. It is thus possible to find whether or not the manner of determining the list had any influence upon the popularity of the poem.

There were eighteen poems in the second grade list of 203 which had a frequency of four or more. Table V shows these poems and the lists in which they occurred.

There were ten poems in the third grade list of 233 which had a frequency of four or more. Table VI shows these poems and the lists in which they occurred.

Interpretations and criticisms. The first striking fact revealed by these data is the wide range of poems found in each grade. The disagreement is so marked that the class-room teacher and the curriculum maker are left very much at sea as to what they shall offer the children. Another fact that should be noted is the character of the poems that do show a high frequency. Without exception they have been well known for many years. Not a single selection of modern verse is found among the thirty-nine which had a frequency of four or more out of a possible frequency of nine.

TABLE IV
FIRST GRADE POEMS WITH FREQUENCY OF FOUR OR MORE CHECKED AGAINST ORIGINAL LISTS

AUTHOR	TITLE	SUBJECTIVE LISTS			OBJECTIVE LISTS						FREQUENCY
		International Kindergarten Union	Lowe	Gardner and Ramsey	Huber, Bruner, Curry	King	Atherton	Barnesberger	Nesmith	Morgan	
Nursery rhymes	Little Boy Blue.....		1	1	1	1					4
Nursery rhymes	Sleep Baby Sleep.....		1		1			1	1		4
Nursery rhymes	Little Bo Peep.....		1	1	1	1					4
Stevenson	The Friendly Cow.....	1	1			1			1		4
Stevenson	Bed in Summer.....	1	1		1				1		4
Stevenson	Autumn Fires.....	1					1	1		1	4
Stevenson	The Wind.....	1			1		1		1		4
Stevenson	Rain.....				1		1	1	1	1	5
Stevenson	The Swing.....				1		1	1	1	1	5
Taylor	Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star..					1	1	1	1	1	5
Tennyson	What Does the Little Birdie Say?.....		1	1	1	1	1		1		6

TABLE V
SECOND GRADE POEMS WITH FREQUENCY OF FOUR OR MORE CHECKED AGAINST ORIGINAL LISTS

AUTHOR	TITLE	SUBJECTIVE LISTS			OBJECTIVE LISTS						FREQUENCY
		International Kindergarten Union	Lowe	Gardner and Ramsey	Huber, Bruner, Curry	King	Atherton	Barnesberger	Nesmith	Morgan	
Cary	Suppose.....						1	1	1	1	4
Field	Rock-a-bye Lady.....			1			1	1		1	4
Field	Winken, Bynken and Nod...				1	1	1		1		4
Ingelow	Seven Times One.....						1	1	1	1	4
Larcom	The Brown Thrush.....			1			1	1	1	1	4
Sherman	The Daisies.....						1	1	1	1	4
Alexander	All Things Bright and Beautiful.....			1	1	1			1		4
Houghton	Lady Moon.....		1				1	1	1	1	5
Child	Thanksgiving Day.....					1	1	1	1	1	5
Kingsley	The Lost Doll.....			1			1	1	1	1	5
Longfellow	Hiawatha's Childhood.....	1			1			1	1	1	5
Lear	The Owl and the Pussy Cat...	1			1		1	1	1	1	6
Allingham	The Fairies.....	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	7
Stevenson	The Land of Story Books.....	1					1	1		1	4
Stevenson	My Bed is a Boat.....			1	1	1			1		4
Stevenson	Where Go the Boats?.....	1		1	1				1		4
Stevenson	My Shadow.....	1	1	1	1	1			1		6
Stevenson	The Wind.....	1				1		1	1	1	5

A casual inspection of Tables IV, V, and VI seems to indicate that the objectively determined lists had more to do with making these frequencies than did

the subjectively determined lists. One explanation of this may be found in the effect that these lists have had upon each other. Atherton made a pioneer study to

TABLE VI
THIRD GRADE POEMS WITH FREQUENCY OF FOUR OR MORE CHECKED AGAINST ORIGINAL LIST

AUTHOR	TITLE	SUBJECTIVE LISTS			OBJECTIVE LISTS						FRE- QUENCY
		Dearborn	Lowe	Gardner and Ramsey	Huber, Bruner, Curry	King	Atherton	Bamesberger	Nesmith	Morgan	
Stevenson	The Land of Story Books.....			1	1	1			1		4
Longfellow	Hiawatha's Sailing.....				1		1	1		1	4
Krout	Little Brown Hands.....				1		1	1		1	4
Bjornson	The Tree.....			1			1	1		1	4
Aldrich	Marjorie's Almanac.....					1	1	1	1	1	5
Brooks	O Little Town of Bethlehem..					1	1	1	1	1	5
Field	Norse Lullaby.....				1		1	1	1	1	5
Jackson	September.....				1	1		1	1	1	5
Rands	Great Wide Beautiful Won- derful World.....			1	1	1		1		1	5
Tennyson	The Owl.....		1		1		1	1	1	1	6

determine current practice. Bamesberger refined his technique and made a much more elaborate study, and then compared her list with his for making the final list. Huber, Bruner and Curry reviewed current text books and courses of study and then secured expert opinion as the sources for their poems which were submitted to the children. Nesmith also consulted courses of study and readers and so found many of the same poems that the other investigators had found. Morgan very frankly drew his list, that he submitted to a vote of the teachers, from the Bamesberger list. Thus it can be seen that a study tends to perpetuate itself in other studies, and a sort of vicious circle is established which does not permit the easy entrance of new materials. This fact raises some question about the reliability of such a method as has been used here for determining curriculum content. Certainly the method cannot be depended upon entirely as a technique for poem selection, since it gives such a limited number of poems and so completely excludes all modern material. It does perhaps indicate a very small basic list of poems that have established their value by long usage.

It is interesting to notice which poet and poems enjoyed the most popularity. Stevenson was easily the poet most frequently mentioned. In grade one, thirty-two different poems of his were mentioned, while in grade two there were twenty-seven different ones listed, and in grade three there were twenty-two. Many of his poems were mentioned for two grades and some for all three. "The Wind" is found in the basic list for grade one with a frequency of four and in the grade two basic list with a frequency of five. "The Land of Story Books" is in both grade two and grade three basic lists, in each case with a frequency of four.

Concluding problem. There are two aspects of the problem of poetry study, the artistic and the scientific. Teachers have made progress in recognizing poetry as an art to which little children will respond naturally and happily when it is properly presented, but certainly the scientific problem of finding what poetry is best suited for different levels of development still remains to be solved. But teachers struggling with this vexatious question may be comforted by the thought that

"Far off the Fairy Horns are blowing."

Advocate for the Fairies

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A MOTHER, apparently much perturbed, wrote me recently that her daughter, who is in an eastern university preparing herself for kindergarten work, was being taught that children should not be told fables and fairy stories, and that mothers and teachers should not read such literature to small children. This mother has been taught otherwise, has reared her own children on fables and fairy lore, and wants to know the harm in them.

One's first impulse, if he is not too dyed in the wool of modern realism, or too old to remember his childhood, is to say none whatever. I, too, can remember the shock I received when I first heard a mother say that she did not approve of telling such "lies" to children. Also I can remember a teacher I had who thought reading such a utilitarian act that any association of reading with pleasure in the content was false procedure. I believe such educators are still extant. The best answer to such a belief is a visit to some progressive kindergarten or to the room of some progressive teacher of the first grade.

In the light of modern studies in both children and children's literature, however, one must not be too dogmatic. Old beliefs are being discarded. Age does not give a thing unquestioned authority. Grandmother's diseases were apparently cured by grandmother's remedies, but modern children have modern diseases and have to be treated by modern remedies.

There are those who maintain that children's stories should be realistic, that fairy stories are disconcerting to small

children, that they hinder, rather than aid, in the child's systematizing the world about him. Fables, we are told, teach negatively, and emphasize undesirable traits in order to teach a moral. The sensational story is barred; the symbolic or Sunday-school story is ousted. What, then, shall we do? What is left? One solution is to have children create their own stories. Another is to select the best of the old children's classics, discard the rest, and utilize the product of modern writers.

Self-expression is replacing reproduction in our schools. Even very small children are able to make up their own stories and create their own dramas. This idea and practice is very commendable, but the product of juvenile authors will not replace the classics. There must be some taking in before there can be much giving out.

This feeling that all literature intended for children's consumption is not palatable is nothing new. Many of our stories have been done over and over again, some to their harm. The story of the Three Bears as Robert Southey wrote it is essentially the story we find in modern versions, but with a difference. In the original story there is no Goldilocks. There is "the little old woman," who, at every turn, is chastised for her breach of good manners and undue curiosity. In Little Red Riding Hood, the wolf is not killed. The wolf fell upon the little girl and "ate her all up." The changed ending has been put there to soften the cruelty of the story.

Whether children should read these stories as they appear in the original, or whether they should have them recast

with a happy ending is probably debatable. No less an authority than John Ruskin objected seriously to any tampering with either the story content or the language. He made out a case for their values in the original. One writer has said that "to Andersen all endings were happy; they were as they should be. Old people die, but would you have them go on living forever? Wicked Inge is punished for her pride, but her soul, after long suffering, turns into the little bird that 'flew straight into the sun'; the little Match Girl starved, but she had the vision of eternal life, and the happiest moment of the little Fir Tree is when it bursts into deathless flame. . . ."

More than a century and a half ago, Rousseau wrote in the preface to *Emile*: "We do not know childhood. . . . Begin, then, by studying your pupils more thoroughly, for it is very certain that you do not know them." That advice and accusation started things in the educational world. Educators did begin to study "pupils," and child psychology is now a study of great value to parents and teachers alike. This study has played no small part in bringing in the Age of the Child. In the selection of literature for children, however, we have been slow in utilizing our acquired knowledge. Until very recently we persisted in giving children what we grown-ups thought was good for them, not what they wanted or enjoyed. Only in recent years have we gone to the child to find out what he likes. Only recently, then, have we made any effort to study literature in relation to the child. Referring again to Rousseau, who wrote that educators were concerned primarily with "what is important for men to know, without considering what children are able to apprehend," we have in literature, more than elsewhere, clung to the notion that children's reading should be given them largely in the manner wise parents use in giving them clothing or food; that

is, what the grown-ups thought they should read. Several studies of children and their spontaneous and uncontrolled reading have shown that we have been most unwise in our selections. We didn't know childhood.

Even before Rousseau wrote, John Locke, an early English writer on education, said that the child should be given such books as *Aesop's Fables* or *Reynard the Fox* for their entertainment rather than for avoidance of punishment. Locke seems to have had the child's pleasure in mind. Another interesting thing about Locke's advice is that he suggested that these books should be illustrated.

The Greek, like the Roman, boy was to be taught the myths and legends of his people for patriotic reasons. Homer was a text for the Greek boy, and he committed him to memory. Historically speaking, therefore, myths, legends, fables, and fairy stories form a part of the child's education. But we have learned to question the value of a thing in the light of the child. We do not accept a thing as valuable merely because it has existed for a length of time.

This study of childhood has taught us that children differ, almost from year to year, that they differ among themselves, and that they differ according to their home environment during the early years. The child who has tumbled about amidst books from infancy, who has handled books, heard stories, and read books is going to have the advantage over the child from the home where books are neither seen nor mentioned, where fairy stories and folk-tales are unknown.

Also, after the age of ten or twelve, the preference of boys differs from that of girls. Not only is that true, but two boys in the same family may differ in their tastes. So may two girls from the same family differ. Furthermore, the preference of a child at four or five is vastly different from that of the same child two or

three years later, or five years later.

The parent is, therefore, doubtless non-plussed to know what to do. The university student with her new-fangled notions is upsetting her mother's self-complacency, even her belief in fairies and elves. Fortunately there are many helps for parents and teachers. There are the classified lists. There are books which give the general tastes of children at certain ages. Terman and Lima's *Children's Reading*, Miss Alice Dalgliesh's *First Experiences With Literature*, and Starbuck's *A Guide To Books For Character*, volume one, will be of great value to the mother. Bamesberger and Broening's *A Guide to Children's Literature*, is valuable for the teacher in particular.

Of these latter books, we must be chary, for my child or your child may be different from the general run of children. Or this child may be ten years old according to the birth record, but twelve in his reading level. Likewise he may be ten years old chronologically, but eight in his reading level. All we can say is that it is unsafe to select a book for a child of three, or of four, five, six, or seven, without knowing both the child and the book. It is equally unwise to say that no child should be told fairy stories. That depends upon the child—and the story.

Miss Dalgliesh's advice to ask ourselves the following questions before buying a book is wholesome:

1. Is the book suited to the mental age of the child?
2. Is the subject matter interesting to this particular child?
3. Is the content of the book worthwhile? Will it stand reading and re-reading or is it a trivial book that will be looked at once, then put aside?
4. Is the content of the book childlike and desirable *throughout*?
5. Is the book well bound and durable?
6. It is suitably illustrated?
7. Is it well written?

The author amplifies these questions in her book.

Our Puritan forefathers preferred their children's stories surcharged with a moral. Each story was a lesson, a sermon, that the child was to profit by. The interest was not in the child's pleasure, but in the moral. Literature became a means of sugar-coating etiquette. Long before Emily Post, writers taught children table manners, calling manners, and the behavior fitting to a lady or a gentleman through verse and story.

Modern educators use the indirect method. They use the story for the pleasure it gives the child, and believe that the unmoral story serves the purpose as well as the moral. Children before the age of eleven or twelve have no sense of right and wrong in the abstract. They can not get the moral from a story. They can not see that this story is meant to teach one thing, and that one to teach something else. In view of this, I suspect it is needless to worry too much about the fatality of telling fairy stories to children, remembering, as has been mentioned previously, that we must suit the story to the reading level of the child. Stories may influence their ideals, their attitudes; all of us can recall some story that has done that for us. But the ordinary child is not concerned with the morals. He wants animals that talk, good fairies, characters that do things. My child of three knows many of the stories commonly told children of even greater age. She plays with her blocks, makes the table, the chairs, and the beds for the three bears, and has Goldilocks come in, taste the porridge, try the chairs, and go to sleep in the little bear's bed. To her it is action, not morality. By the time she can see the bad manners of Goldilocks, she will be able to understand the significance of the story.

Mother Goose is unmoral; so is Stevenson's juvenile verse; so is *Alice in Wonderland*. The effort—if any—in these

childhood friends is to present right ideals in a pleasing way. If they teach certain virtues, they do so indirectly and attractively. They may influence right action, but their authors did not think of that primarily when they wrote them.

It is as futile to lay down definite rules for the literary composition of these folk tales as it is to lay down literary rules for the early English and Scotch ballads. All we can do is to try to deduct the rules from the compositions before us. The story should be, as Mrs. MacClintock says, ethically sound. "One does not teach literature in order to teach morals," she writes, "and he cannot ask that his fairy tale should turn out a sermon, or that his hero tale deliberately inculcate this or that virtue. . . . But let him beware also of those less obvious immoralities, where the success of the story turns upon some piece of unjustifiable trickery or disobedience, or irreverence, or some more serious immorality, which thus has placed upon it the weight of approval." Mrs. MacClintock then attacks Jack and the Bean Stalk and The Three Bears. She might have added Puss in Boots. These stories are not ethically sound according to our present standards, and I doubt that we should even expect them to be. The acts of the characters involved in these three stories are neither moral nor immoral; they are simply unmoral. Just as unmoral as the acts described in any old ballad.

We must remember that fairy stories, the whole field of children's literature, are literature, not science; not literature of knowledge, but literature of power. The appeal is not intellectual, but emotional, spiritual, and should be judged as such. I think Suzzallo covers the idea when he writes with reference to the morals of fairy stories:

While fairy tales have no immediate purpose other than to amuse, they leave a substantial by-product which has a moral significance. In every

reaction which the child has for distress or humor in the tale, he deposits another layer of vicarious experience which sets his character more firmly in the mold of right or wrong attitude. Every sympathy, every aversion helps to set the impulsive currents of his life and to give direction to his personality.

Dr. Felix Adler has said that the better fairy stories have pedagogic values in that they exercise and cultivate the imagination, and stimulate the idealizing tendency.

Folk lore of the traditional type does come from an age more coarse, and probably more cruel than ours; but, because of this, the tales are more spontaneous, ingenuous. The stories of the Bible are certainly not models of good behavior. The great characters of the Old Testament are a strange mixture of legend, myth, and fable, a strange combination of goodness and badness. The tellers of those tales felt an interest in their heroes; they saw to it that they won, carried their point. Immoral? I believe not. Harmful? No! Not if given in their proper setting, and to children old enough to enjoy them. They represent the childhood of a race, hence are most suitable for children. They are no more bad, wicked, cruel, vulgar, or immoral than a child can be bad, wicked, cruel, vulgar, or immoral in his acts. But we should remember Moses as a warrior and ruler, like Jesus as a performer of miracles, is not for small children.

Objection to the Cinderella story is based on the stress it puts on social distinctions. Jack and the Bean Stalk is condemned because of the disobedience and trickery involved. The Three Bears is attacked because the story excuses bad manners. Well, I wonder if these objections are well founded. I find no evidence among children that their analysis of the Cinderella story or the conclusions they have arrived at are so subtle that the story has ever made them feel the least dissatisfied with their lot in life. The story

A Critical Summary of Selective Research

Supplement

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The studies listed here form a supplement to the Second Annual Research Bulletin of The National Conference on Research in Elementary School English, *A Critical Summary of Selective Research in Elementary School Composition, Language, and Grammar*, which appeared serially in *The Review* from March to September, 1934.

Ballenger, Harvey L., "The Validation of a Series of Diagnostic Tests in Language." Ph.D. Dissertation, College of Education, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Directed by Dr. Harry A. Greene, 1929. Unpublished. Filed in university library.

Character of Research: Experimental.

Problem: An examination of the present language tests used for diagnostic or survey purposes indicates that many of the objectives are not given consideration in their construction. Because of the limitations of the present tests, the development of Iowa Diagnostic Language Tests was attempted. The tests attempt to locate and measure objectively the various skills used in transmission of thought.

Barnes, Walter, "Certain Aspects of the Out-of-School Language Activities of Children of the Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Grades." Ph.D. Thesis. Directed by Dr. Howard R. Driggs, New York University, 1930.

Character of Research: Survey and analysis.

Problem: The immediate purpose of the investigation was to discover and summarize the facts concerning those aspects of language selected for study. The ultimate purpose was to indicate the significance of these facts to school education in English in these grades.

Brainard, Helen A., "Identification of Pre-Third Grade Language Skills." Master's Thesis, College of Education, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Directed by Dr. Harry A. Greene, August 1933. Unpublished. Filed in education library.

Character of Research: The identification and ranking in importance of pre-third grade language skills by assembling and organizing data received in the form of special reports from pre-third grade teachers.

Problem: To discover specific language skills which should be definitely taught prior to the third grade as a basis for setting up the third grade course of study.

Bruce, Jeannette, "A Study of the Use of the Hyphen in Certain Compound Words." Master's Thesis, College of Education, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Directed by Dr. Harry A. Greene, 1930. Unpublished. Filed in university library.

Character of Research: Experimental.

Problem: To determine the comparative difficulty of certain compound words in writing and spelling situations confronting grades five to nine inclusive. This study attempts to answer such questions as the following: (1) Which of the three forms of compound words, (a) the hyphenated, (b) the separate word form, (c) or the solid form, presents the greatest difficulty within a grade or from grade to grade? (2) Does the level of performance increase from grade to grade? (3) In what grades is the increase in the level of performance significant?

Crawford, J. R., "The Drill Content of Certain Practice Exercises in Language." Master's Thesis, College of Education, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Directed by Dr. Harry A. Greene, 1929.

Character of Research: Analysis.

Problem: Analysis of certain supplementary drill exercises in language for the purpose of determining the extent to which they furnish material that really contributes to the choice of words and the correct usages of verbs, pronouns, and modifiers in the school experience of the child.

Dawson, Mildred, "Language Text Books: A Study of Five Recent Seventh Grade Texts." A graduate paper prepared in the School of Education, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois. *The Elementary English Review*, Vol. VI, Nos. 2 and 3 (Feb.-Mar. 1929), pp. 43-46; pp. 69-73.

Character of Research: Analysis of five recent seventh-grade texts and comparison with a similar study made in 1924.

Problem: (1) To discover recent changes in emphasis in language-composition instruction. (2) To determine the degree to which progressive tendencies in English instruction are embodied in recent seventh-grade texts. (3) To discover the extent to which recent texts facilitate attainment of the special objectives of the upper grades.

Driggs, H. Wayne, "Certain Aspects of the Out-of-School Written Vocabulary of Boys and Girls Twelve to Fifteen Years of Age, Inclusive." Ph.D. Thesis, School of Education, New York University, 1932. Unpublished. Filed in the university library.

Character of Research: Analysis.

Problem: (1) To discover the basic vocabulary of children for the ages named. (2) To study the characteristics of their word choice. (3) To indicate the possible vocabulary norms for various levels of composition ability of boys and girls of these ages. (4) To determine the carry-over of school vocabulary training into the out-of-school written language expression of pupils. (5) To point out the educational implications of the findings as applied to language teaching procedures.

Everett, Janie Estelle, "The Present Status of Language Instruction in the Primary Grades." A survey of twenty-five courses of study. Master's Thesis, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Directed by Dr. Gerald Yoakum, 1927. Unpublished. Filed in the University of Pittsburgh library.

Character of Research: Analysis of twenty-five courses of study in English.

The Problem: The purpose of study was to find the present status of language instruction in the primary grades by: (1) Tabulating the most frequent activities. (2) Determining agreement as to activities as stated by the course of study writers. (3) Determining the likeness and differences among the activities of the different courses. (4) Determining sectional likenesses and differences in activities. (5) Comparing the activities as found in the courses with the objectives as set forth by the Committee on English in the Fourth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence.

Fellows, John E., "The Influence of Theme-Reading and Theme-Correction on Eliminating Technical Errors in the Written Compositions of Ninth Grade Pupils." Ph.D. Dissertation, College of Education, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Directed by Thomas J. Kirby, June 1929. Published. Filed in education library.

Character of Research: Reading and correcting themes written by ninth grade pupils.

Problem: What is the influence of theme-reading and theme-correction on eliminating technical errors in the written compositions of ninth-grade pupils?

Hannah, Margaret Hood, "Subjects Chosen by Sixth Grade Children for Spontaneous Composition." Master's Thesis, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Directed by Dr. Gerald Yoakum, 1928. Unpublished. Filed in the university library.

Character of Research: Survey.

Problem: (1) To discover what sixth grade children really like to write about when they are influenced neither by the teacher nor the textbook. (2) To find out whether the subjects chosen spontaneously by children agree with those suggested in ten representative English books and courses of study as appropriate topics for compositions in that grade.

Hays, Louella, "A Study of Certain Skills Found in Elementary English Textbooks." Master's Thesis, Colorado State Teachers College, 1931. Unpublished. Filed in university library.

Character of Research: Analysis.

Problem: This study is an analysis of seven series of elementary English textbooks, grades 3 to 6 inclusive, made for the purpose of discovering: (1) the skills in capitalization, punctuation, correct usage, and writing letters and notes on which the books are providing practice; (2) the grades in which each skill is given practice; and (3) the amount of practice which each skill receives in each grade and in each series of books.

Hobbet, Mary A., "The Relative Quality of Written Products in Language and the Content Subjects." Master's Thesis. College of Education, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Directed by Dr. Harry A. Greene, August 1933. Unpublished. Filed in education library.

Character of Research: The carry-over of language skills into written work in other subjects.

Problem: Assembling and analyzing pupil paragraphs written in language, geography, and history to discover the relative quality of written work of the children in these subjects.

Klein, Charlotte, "The Frequency in the Use of Adjectives and the Correlation between the Use of Adjectives and the Intelligence Quotient in a 5A Class." Master's Thesis, New York University, 1931. Unpublished. Filed in university library.

Character of Research: Analysis.

Problem: The purpose of this investigation is to discover the frequency in the use of adjectives and to see whether any correlation exists between the use of adjectives and the intelligence quotient in a 5A class.

Lansdowne, Katie, "Grade Placement of the Elements of Formal Grammar in Twenty-Five Public School Systems in the United States." Master's Dissertation, University of Wichita, Wichita, Kansas. Directed by Dean E. K. Hillbrand, June 1930. Unpublished. Filed in university library.

Character of Research: Analysis of recent English courses of study.

Problem: To determine what elements of forced grammar are being presented in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades of public school systems in representative cities of the United States.

Laughlin, Frances A., "Verb Usage in the Oral Language of a Group of Primary Grade Children." (A study of oral usage of verbs.) Master's Thesis, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Directed by Dr. Harry A. Greene, 1932. Unpublished.

Character of Research: Analysis of verb utterances of primary school children.

Problem (as indicated by investigator): (1) To examine and classify the actual verb and verb phrase utterances of children in the lower grades of school. (2) To determine the usage and importance of specific verb forms.

Leonard, John Paul, "The Use of Practice Exercises in the Teaching of Capitalization and Punctuation." *Contributions to Education* No. 372, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1930.

Character of Research: An experimental appraisal of certain practice exercises for the teaching of capitalization and punctuation.

Problem: (1) To study immediate and permanent learnings by practice exercises. (2) To determine the validity and reliability of a test to measure certain abilities in punctuation and capitalization.

McBroom, Maude, "Course of Study in Written Composition in the Elementary Grades." Master's Thesis, College of Education, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Directed by Dr. Ernest Horn, January, 1928. Filed in education library.

Character of Research: Analysis of written composition situations in the elementary grades.

Problem: To prepare a course of study which would guide teachers and supervisors in the different grades of the elementary school.

Newkirk, Mary, "A Case Study of the Oral Language Habits of a Selected Group of Young Children." Master's Thesis, College of Education, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Directed by Dr. Harry A. Greene, 1930.

Character of Research: Analysis.

Problem: This study is an attempt to determine what constitutes a suitable course of study in elementary language. Although numerous factors might have been studied, this investigation attempts to discover which factors underlie verb usage.

Pease, Kent, "A Study of the Grammar Usages and Errors and their Treatment from the Seventh through the Twelfth Grades in Woodbridge (New Jersey) High School." Master's Thesis, New York University, 1931. Unpublished. Filed in university library.

Character of Research: Analysis.

Problem: The purpose of study is to answer definite questions as to what to teach and where to teach it in school.

Pressey, S. L., "Measurement of Progress in English in the Upper Grades." (A study of the predictive value of control tests in English mechanics.) Paper presented at the Eighth Annual Conference on Educational Measurements. *Bulletin of the Extension Division of Indiana University*, Volume VI, Number 12, pp. 35-45. Bloomington, Indiana, 1921.

Character of Research: Statistical appraisal of techniques for predicting general ability in written English.

Problem: (1) To compare the reliability of composition scales and control tests in English mechanics in predicting general ability in written English. (2) To define and analyze "the factors involved in English composition and their measurement." (3) "To investigate the accuracy of the measures yielded by such instruments as the Hillegas and Willing Scales, in measuring the quality of English composition." (4) To discover whether children write equally well on different topics.

Rivlin, Harry N., "Functional Grammar." *Contributions to Education*, No. 435. Teachers College, Columbia University.

Character of Research: To survey opinion and practice relative to functional value of each item of grammar.

Shepherd, Edith E., "An Experiment in Teaching English Usage to Junior High School Pupils." (A study in the technique of teaching with seventh

grade pupils.) *School Review* XXXIII (December, 1925). Pp. 675-84.

Character of Research: An evaluation of the effectiveness of individual instruction and group instruction in the teaching of English usage.

Problem: To determine the most effective technique for developing an understanding of the facts and principles of good English usage.

Smith, Madorah Elizabeth, "An Investigation of the Development of the Sentence and the Extent of Vocabulary in Young Children." (A study of sentence development and extent of vocabulary of pre-school children). *University of Iowa Studies in Child Welfare*, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 1926.

Character of Research: An analytical study of sentence development and vocabulary growth.

Problem: (1) To determine the growth in sentence construction of pre-school children. (2) To determine the extent of growth in the vocabulary of pre-school children. (3) To develop a test for measuring the extent of a child's vocabulary. (4) To determine the influence of certain factors purported to affect the rapidity of language development.

Stadlander, Elizabeth Louise, "Adjectives Used by Elementary School Children." Master's Thesis, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Directed by Dr. Gerald Yoakum and Dr. Gladys Hathway, 1932. Unpublished. Filed in the university library.

Character of Research: Survey.

Problem: (1) To discover the range and variety of adjectives and other colorful and descriptive words which children of elementary grades know and use. (2) To compare the use of adjectival expressions by "foreign" children with "American" children. (3) To discover the correlation between the use of adjectives and intelligence.

Symonds, Percival M. and Chase, Harter, "Practice Versus Motivation." (A study of the relative efficacy of practice and motivation in learning with sixth grade pupils). *Journal of Educational Psychology*. XX (January, 1929). Pp. 19-35.

Character of Research: An experimental evaluation of the effect of motivated and un-motivated practice in learning English usage.

Problem: To determine the influence of practice and motivation on learning. Stated more specifically, the problem was to determine (1) the effect of different amounts of practice, and (2) the effect of different types of motivation with practice constant.

Symonds, Percival M. and Lee, Baldwin, "Studies in the Learning of English Expression": I. "Punctuation." (Analysis of punctuation errors.)

Teachers College Record, XXX (February 1929). Pp. 461-80.

Character of Research: An analytical study of the frequency and persistence of punctuation errors in children's compositions.

Problem: To determine the growth which takes place in children's ability to punctuate.

Thomas, Jesse Edward, "The Elimination of Technical Errors in Written Composition Through Formal Drill." Ph.D. Dissertation, College of Education, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Directed by Dr. T. J. Kirby, July 1930. Filed in education library.

Character of Research: Testing of a method of teaching pupils to avoid technical errors in written composition.

Problem: This was an experimental study on the ninth grade level of the particular efficacy of a device, dictation drills and multiple response exercises, in the elimination of certain of the more important technical language errors which occur in written composition, as compared with the efficacy of the usual type of English teaching. This study was concerned with two specific problems, namely: (1) To what extent does formal drill of the dictation and multiple response type on the more important English errors reduce such errors in similar formal situations, and (2) To what extent does reduction of such errors on formal drill carry over to the reduction of such errors in written composition.

Tucker, Frances, "A Study of the Prevailing Practice of Teaching Composition in Grades VII, VIII, and IX." Master's Thesis, College of Education, University of Wichita, Wichita, Kansas. Directed by Dean Karl E. Hillbrand, June 1931. Unpublished. Filed in the university library.

Character of Research: Analysis of English courses of study.

Problems: (1) To ascertain how much time is given to the study of oral and written expression. (2) To discover what topics are considered appropriate and worthwhile for class work. (3) To survey methods and devices recommended for the teaching of composition in grades seven, eight, and nine.

Wachstetter, Edith D., "Study of Written Composition in Primary Grades." Cleveland Heights (Ohio) Public Schools, 1934. Unpublished.

Character of Research: Experimental.

Problem: Study of extent to which form and content develop simultaneously in early written composition.

White, Carl R., "Semantic Variations in Oral and Written Vocabularies." Master's Thesis, College of Education, University of Iowa, Iowa City,

Among the Publishers

FOR YOUNG READERS

Butterwick Farm. By Clifford Webb. Illus. by the author. Frederick Warne. \$2.00.

English. The book shows an understanding of children that is quaint and charming to an adult, and one which produces an enthralling story for little children.

Hansi. By Ludwig Bemelmans. Illus. by the author. Viking, 1934. \$2.00

The Austrian Tyrol. An unusually attractive volume, both in text and pictures.

Miki and Mary: Their Search for Treasures. Illus. by the authors. Viking, 1934. \$2.50.

Their search for treasures leads Miki and Mary through a number of exciting adventures in the countries of southern Europe.

The Three Bears. A Family Story. Told and illus. by Beatrice Dvilnsky and Miriam Kallen. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1934. \$1.00.

Here is the ideal book for the pre-school or first or second grade child. The vocabulary is simple, and the drawings bring the story definitely within the child's own experience, for the bears are teddy bears, and Goldilocks, a doll.

Cinderella. Illus. by Helen Sewell. Macmillan, 1934. \$1.75.

The pictures are attractive, but the text of the old story is over-simplified, omitting some of the details which have endeared the tale to generations of children.

The Lost Merry-go-round. By Dorothy P. Lathrop. Illus. by the author. Macmillan, 1934. \$2.00.

A winsome story, and nobody can catch, in drawings, the elfish qualities of children and animals as successfully as Dorothy Lathrop.

Away Goes Sally. By Elizabeth Coatsworth. Illus. by Helen Sewell. Macmillan, 1934. \$2.00.

Sally went to Maine in the 1790's. Illustrations are in the manner of the old steel engravings. A good choice for girls 6-10.

Having a Guardian Angel. Illus. by Ida Bohatta-Morpurgo. Words by Cecily Hallock. Dutton, \$1.00.

The illustrations have the soft texture characteristic of much German color-printing.

A First Bible. Illus. by Helen Sewell. Oxford, 1934. \$2.50.

These stories from the King James version, are the heritage of every English speaking child.

THE INTERMEDIATE YEARS

Tabitha Mary. A Little Girl of 1810. By Ethel Parton. Illus. by Margaret Platt. Viking, 1933. \$2.00.

New England in the early nineteenth century, is recreated in this book.

A Scotch Circus. The Story of Tammas who Rode the Dragon. By Tom Powers. Illus. by Lois Lenski. Houghton Mifflin, 1934. \$1.75.

Linn Dickson, Confederate. By Allan Dwight. Illus. by Margaret Ayer. Macmillan, 1934. \$1.75.

The 18-year-old hero serves with the Confederate army at Fredricksburg and Gettysburg. Boys, 8-14.

Wind in the Chimney. By Cornelia Meigs. Illus. by Louise Mansfield. Macmillan, 1934. \$2.00.

Pennsylvania in the early nineteenth century, portrayed by the winner of this year's Newbery prize.

Gay Soeurette. By Ada Claire Darby. Illus. by Grade Gilkison. Stokes, 1933. \$1.75.

The author knows the setting and the period well. Louisiana Territory under France and Spain. Stephen F. Austin appears in the story as a small boy.

THE UPPER GRADES

Bridges. By Henry H. Bormann. Illus. with photographs. Macmillan, 1934. \$2.00.

An excellent gift for an upper-grade boy with a bent for engineering. The volume would be of great value in a school library.

The Scarlet Coat. By Frances Gaither. Illus. by Herve Stein. Macmillan, 1934. \$2.00.

La Salle and the French settlements in the South. *Dobry.* By Monica Shannon. Illus. by Atanas Katchamakoff. Viking, 1934. \$2.00.

A Bulgarian peasant-boy finally gains his family's consent to study art.

Whalers of the Midnight Sun: A Story of Modern Whaling in the Antarctic. Illus. with woodcuts by Charles Pont. Scribner's, 1934. \$2.00.

"The details of whaling and of the Antarctic are correct." An excellent book for older boys.

FOR EVERY AGE

Aesop's Fables. Ed. and illus. with wood engravings by Boris Artzybasheff. Viking, 1933. \$2.00.

The drawings are highly decorative. An unusually beautiful book for a permanent collection. Libraries would do well to purchase this edition.

Beth, a Sheepdog. By Ernest Lewis. Illus. Dutton. \$2.00.

A fine dog story for any age.

The Last Pirate. Tales from the Gilbert and Sullivan Operas. By Louis Untermeyer. Illus. by Reginald Birch. Harcourt, Brace, 1934. \$2.50.

Librarians and puzzled shoppers can't go wrong with this.

Editorial

Lessening the Movie Obsession

THE CHURCHES have set out on a laudable campaign to reform the talkies. Their efforts have already met with some degree of success, for there is evidence of attempts at reform within the film world. The ethical tissue of the screen, however, cannot be revolutionized overnight. Complete reform of the talkies, from the standpoint of the teacher whose concern is for sensitive, growing children, is some distance in the future. Persistent, long, arduous effort, and the coöperation of all agencies for social betterment, are necessary.

In the meantime, something may be done from within the schools as well as from within the churches. For one thing, counter-forces may be called upon to offset certain outstanding evils, one of the greatest of which is inherent in the talkies themselves, regardless of the ethical character of the pictures shown. Going to the talkies has become an obsession with children, blotting from life the play world of childhood. Some remedy is needed here. Regardless of the character of the allurements, so complete an absorption by any one single force is menacing.

This craving of young children to mass themselves into the dark confines of motion picture theatres to the exclusion of play impulses is a situation that bodes no good. Watch city children any bright Saturday afternoon or any holiday. Right through the marble-shooting, top-spinning, kite-flying, violet-hunting seasons they are slouched, three and four abreast, in a crawling, deeply absorbed line, to be

gulped up at the box office window of the talkie house. Drive from the heart of a metropolis in any direction, and that is the spectacle. In Detroit there are more than a hundred of these places, with the inevitable masses of children on their way to the darkness of the talkie theatre; and every neighborhood theatre has its duplicate in small towns throughout the country. No sunlight, no vigorous play—only the sophisticated languor of a morbid obsession—unwholesome, even though the picture itself be innocuous.

What people can survive whose children cease to play, from whose life the play-spirit of childhood is smothered? What is to be said for a society whose very children are jaded hunters for second-hand thrills? While the churches are striving to erase from the films that which is vicious, unethical, and vulgar, cannot the schools assist from another angle? We should entice children into the open air in bright weather. We should lay claims upon their time through an extension of interest in natural science, manual arts, health education, music, sketching, the library, wholesome hobbies, the school playground, class and school picnics, and so cut in on the margin of leisure now dominated by the talkies. For every hour spent in the close darkness of a poorly ventilated movie theatre, give the children two or three or four hours of bright, vigorous, rollicking play in the open—out of doors if possible, but at least in a well ventilated, well lighted, and not over-heated room.

ADVOCATE FOR THE FAIRIES

(Continued from page 271)

enables them to play the little wishing game and transport themselves out of their surroundings. And it is not a bad game. Jack grieved his mother, stole from the giant, and finally killed him. But didn't he also avenge the death of his father? My experience with children leads me to think they relish the killing, and I suspect most grown-ups do, too. Isn't the story simply one of adventure above the clouds where the giants live? Doesn't every normal boy go there many times in his boyhood? If he doesn't, he should. Possibly the modern boy would use an airplane instead of a magic beanstalk, but he would lose some of the pleasure. Every boy must climb, work, get tired, if he expects to be rewarded, and that is exactly

what Jack does. The nosey "little old woman" who has been rechristened Goldilocks is nothing more than a resolving character in the story. Children like the bears. Their analysis of the story comes only when they are able, through other experiences that are more real, to resist copying such bad manners. Miss Repplier thinks the children would have none of the hero who would explain to the king that he was not the true Marquis of Carabas, and I think she is right. "Like the sleeping princess in the wood, the fairy tale may be hedged about with bristling notes and thickets and commentaries, but the child will pass straight to the beauty, and awaken for his own delight the charmed life."

A CRITICAL SUMMARY OF SELECTIVE RESEARCH

(Continued from page 275)

Iowa. Directed by Dr. Harry A. Greene, July 1934. Unpublished. Filed in education library.

Character of Research: Experimental determination of the semantic variations in word meaning used by pupils in oral and written composition on the same subjects.

Problem: (1) To show the semantic variations in word meaning for words actually used by pupils in both oral and written composition. (2) To point out the differences in meaning of words used orally from those used in written composition.

Williams, Harold J., "An Evaluation of Certain Practice Exercises in Language Teaching." Master's Thesis, College of Education, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Directed by Dr. Harry A. Greene, 1930. Unpublished. Filed in the university library.

Character of Research: Experimental.

Problem: To what extent does the use of a spe-

cific type of language drill, when used in connection with the regular classroom instruction, aid in the elimination of language errors when compared with regular classroom instruction without the drill?

Zyve, Claire Turner, "Investigation of Conversation among Third Grade Children." Master's Thesis, Teachers College, Columbia University. 1926. Filed in Teachers College library.

Subject: The topics and content of free conversation.

Problem: (1) To discover the topics of conversation chosen by third grade children. (2) To determine the value of conversation in increasing vocabulary. (3) To show whether or not conversational ability can be developed equally in all children. (4) To compare the length of conversations at the beginning and end of the experiment. (5) To discover what slang is used by children in free conversation.

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